

Mineral Industry Surveys

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MARKETABLE PHOSPHATE ROCK IN AUGUST 1999

U.S. marketable phosphate rock production in August 1999 increased 4% compared to the prior month, according to the U.S. Geological Survey (USGS). Annualized year-to-date production was 41.9 million metric tons, which was 5% lower than the total production in 1998.

Domestic phosphate rock sold or used, excluding exports for August, decreased 2% from the prior month, to 3.5 million tons. Annualized year-to-date sales or use was 42.7 million tons, about 2% lower than the total for 1998.

U.S. producer ending stocks for August were 3% higher than the figure shown in July.

Some phosphate rock import data for Morocco are suppressed by the Bureau of the Census; total U.S. import tonnage was estimated by USGS to average 150,000 tons per month, or 1.8 million tons per year. August import data were not available at the time of publication.

Annualized domestic consumption for 1999 was calculated to be 44.2 million tons using annualized sold and used data and estimated trade data. Apparent domestic consumption for 1998, calculated from the sum of home deliveries and adjusted import data, was 45.0 million tons.

Potash Corporation of Saskatchewan (PCS) announced the closure of several phosphate operations in response to weak market conditions caused by reduced domestic consumption and foreign sales. The company will permanently close the Saltville, VA, feed phosphate plant and temporarily close the Suwannee River hemihydrate plant at White Springs, FL. This will reduce the firm's P_2O_5 capacity by 110,000 tons and remove 240,000 tons of diammonium phosphate (DAP) from the market. PCS will

also permanently close its Jacksonville, FL terminal and consolidate its phosphate export distribution system through Morehead City, NC (Green Markets, 1999).

IMC-Agrico Co. announced other temporary phosphate plant closures in response to market conditions. It suspended production of triple superphosphate at New Wales, FL, and sulfuric acid production at Nichols, FL. Phosphoric acid and DAP production at Nichols have been idled since October 1998 (IMC Global Inc., 1999).

In Jordan, a privatization agreement to operate and expand the Aqaba Railway System was signed by the railway's international operating group and the Government of Jordan. The group consists of Jordan Phosphate Mines Corp., Mitsubishi Corp. (Japan), Consolidated Contractors Corp. (Greece), and two U.S. firms, Raytheon Infrastructure Inc. and Wisconsin Central Transportation Corp. During the next three years, the consortium will modernize and expand the railway to connect the Eshidiya phosphate rock mine with the port of Aqaba (Fertilizer Markets, 1999).

References Cited

- FertilizerMarkets, 1999, Elsewhere this week: FertilizerMarkets, v. 10, no. 6, August 23, p. 4.
Green Markets, 1999, PCS closes five facilities; some permanently: Green Markets, v. 23, no. 33, August 16, p. 1, 12.
IMC Global Inc., 1999, IMC-Agrico announces further production cutbacks at phosphate operations: Northbrook, IL, IMC Global Inc. press release, August 19, 1 p.

TABLE 1
U.S. PHOSPHATE ROCK STATISTICS, BY REGION 1/

(Thousand metric tons)

Region and period	Marketable production	Sold and/or used	Ending stocks 2/
United States:			
1998:			
August	3,980	3,750	7,740
September	3,530	3,340	7,940
October	3,800	3,870	7,850
November	3,680	3,510	8,050
December	3,480	3,530	7,920
January - December	44,100	43,400	XX
1999:			
January	3,410	3,400	7,730
February	3,070	3,190	7,600
March	3,500	3,710	7,340
April	3,280	3,640	6,880
May	3,680	3,940	6,620
June	3,690	3,400	6,910
July	3,540	3,610	6,750
August	3,690	3,530	6,920
Total	27,900	28,400	XX
Florida and North Carolina:			
1998:			
August	3,310	3,310	6,120
September	3,080	2,850	6,360
October	3,370	3,320	6,380
November	3,360	3,130	6,660
December	3,110	3,130	6,540
January - December	38,600	37,800	XX
1999:			
January	2,970	2,990	6,420
February	2,760	2,840	6,330
March	3,120	3,290	6,100
April	2,780	3,150	5,620
May	3,100	3,340	5,380
June	3,030	2,940	5,430
July	2,980	3,010	5,300
August	3,080	3,070	5,320
Total	23,800	24,600	XX
Idaho and Utah:			
1998:			
August	663	441	1,620
September	456	494	1,590
October	434	555	1,460
November	312	384	1,390
December	368	403	1,380
January - December	5,490	5,670	XX
1999:			
January	436	413	1,310
February	314	352	1,280
March	375	412	1,240
April	499	483	1,260
May	582	604	1,240
June	662	461	1,480
July	563	602	1,440
August	614	459	1,600
Total	4,050	3,790	XX

XX Not applicable.

1/ Data are rounded to three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

2/ Includes inventory adjustments.

TABLE 2
U.S. IMPORTS OF PHOSPHATE ROCK 1/ 2/ 3/

(Thousand metric tons and thousand dollars)

Period	Quantity	Value
1998:		
July	61	3,750
August	65	3,930
September	62	3,440
October	78	5,530
November	--	--
December	62	3,800
January - December	806	42,400
Total year 4/	1,760	92,700
1999:		
January	60	3,280
February	63	3,420
March	68	3,670
April	66	4,000
May	69	4,110
June	64	3,820
July	1	69
Total	391	22,400

1/ C.i.f. (cost, insurance, and freight) values at U.S. ports.

2/ Data are rounded to three significant digits; may not add to totals shown.

3/ Data for the current month were not available at time of publication.

4/ Includes estimate for data suppressed by Bureau of the Census.

Source: Bureau of the Census; data on the majority of phosphate rock imports from Morocco were suppressed by Census.

TABLE 3
COMPARATIVE U.S. PHOSPHATE ROCK STATISTICS

(Million metric tons, unless otherwise specified)

	1997	1998	1999 1/
Marketable production:			
Florida and North Carolina	39.8	38.7	35.7
Idaho and Utah	6.1	5.5	6.1
Total 2/	45.9	44.2	41.9
Sold or used by producers:			
Florida and North Carolina	36.6	38.0	37.0
Idaho and Utah	5.5	5.6	5.7
Total 2/	42.1	43.7	42.7
Yearend stocks	7.9	7.9	6.9
Exports 3/	0.3	0.4	0.3
Average value per ton	\$34.80	\$42.70	\$48.30
Imports for consumption e/	1.8	1.8	1.8
Average value per ton	\$50.19	\$52.66	NA
Apparent consumption e/ 4/	43.6	45.0	44.2

e/ Estimated. NA Not available.

1/ Annualized data.

2/ Data may not add to totals shown because of independent rounding.

3/ Source: Bureau of the Census.

4/ Calculated as domestic sold or used plus imports minus exports, where imports are estimated to average about 150,000 tons per month.